

MEMO

DATE: February 9, 2006

TO: Transportations and Communications Committee

FROM: Jeremy Bailey, Temporary Regional Transportation Planner

SUBJECT: SAFETEA-LU Update to JARC and New Freedom Programs

SUMMARY:

In response to new FTA requirements, staff will present an update of the SAFETEA-LU programs: Job Access Reverse Commute (JARC) and New Freedoms and their implications for SCAG.

BACKGROUND:

The new program "New Freedoms" provides formula funding for new public transportation services and alternatives for people with disabilities beyond what is required by ADA. While the Job Access Reverse Commute (JARC) program has been updated with a new funding allocation formula and supports the development and maintenance of job access projects to transport welfare recipients (etc) to and from work on non-peak hours as well as supply reverse commute options for workers in suburban cores.

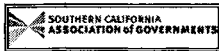
As required by SAFETEA-LU the MPO (SCAG) is the designated recipient of these program funds and as such is required to:

1. Competitively selects projects derived from a locally developed coordinated plan.
2. Develop a participation plan that provides opportunities for comment.

In response to these requirements SCAG staff is in the process of creating an administrative, planning and financial strategy designed to balance SCAG's responsibilities with the CTC's in our region while fulfilling our required duties.

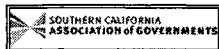
SAFETEA-LU UPDATE

JARC/ NEW FREEDOM



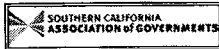
New Programs:

- ❖ **New Freedom, 5317:** Provides formula funding for new public transportation services and alternatives for people with disabilities beyond what is required by ADA. (Beyond ADA not yet defined by FTA, could mean more supplemental service and more revenue hours for operators).



Program Updates:

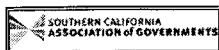
- ❖ **JARC, 5316:** Supports the development and maintenance of job access projects to transport welfare recipients (etc) to and from work on non-peak hours as well as supply reverse commute options for workers in suburban cores; updated with a new funding allocation formula.



Implications for SCAG/ New Requirements:

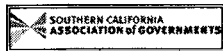
- ❖ **Funding Allocation:** Funds for both JARC and New Freedom are allocated based on a formula that distributes funds to urbanized areas. SCAG is the designated recipient of these funds for five classified urbanized areas in our region.
- ❖ **Coordination:** Under JARC/ New Freedoms, SCAG (designated recipient) competitively selects projects derived from a "locally developed coordinated plan".

(See quotes 1 & 2)



Implications for SCAG/ New Requirements:

- ❖ **Public Participation/ Planning Requirements:** SCAG must develop a participation plan that provides opportunities for comment. The MPO (designated recipient) may use 10% of JARC/ New Freedom funding for administrative costs.



Issues For SCAG

- ❖ (New Freedoms/ JARC) are better suited for regions with one CTC and one operator.
- ❖ Our region has hundreds of social service providers.
- ❖ SCAG could possibly receive hundreds or thousands of project funding requests that are difficult to evaluate eligibility and coordinate.
- ❖ With limited time and tremendous staffing demands SCAG would choose to sub-allocate funds to the CTC's (County Transportation Commissions) so each could conduct their own competitive process for projects selection.

(See Quote 3)



SCAG Strategy

Administrative:

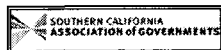
- ❖ SCAG will hire one consultant for the entire group (all CTC's and SCAG).
- ❖ Each CTC competitively selects projects and solicits grant applications from their region using consultant developed criteria while SCAG does the administrative work and inputs a single consultant project into the OWP. (See Quote 5)
- ❖ SCAG is allotted up to 10% of the program funds for any administrative and planning costs. SCAG's FY 2006 10% share comes to \$1,338,816. While awaiting further clarifications from the FTA the budget will only contain generic tasks.



SCAG Strategy

Planning:

- ❖ Consultant will develop the (TIP like) participation plan and the locally developed coordinated plan from a needs assessment while employing competitive project selection criteria currently employed by the CTC's. (See Quote 2 & 4)



SCAG Strategy

Financial:

- ❖ SCAG will sub-allocate funds to the CTC's. At present no funding distribution mechanism is in place while we await clarification from the FTA.
- ❖ Funding distribution will be close to the current 5310 (Special Needs of Elderly and Disabled) process for FY 06 which mirrors the current JARC process. With 5310, the CTC's request project proposals, conduct a review with (Caltrans based criteria) and send requests to their boards for approval. Because the CTC's are the grantees for these funds they make participants sub-grantees so they can qualify.



SCAG Strategy

- ❖ SCAG has scheduled a March meeting with the CTC's and FTA for a continuation and clarification of this process. Many more details require explanation and we await more explicit and precise language from the FTA over the next few months.

Source: Federal Register, November 30, 2005:

http://www.fta.dot.gov/legal/federal_register/2004/16290_17929_ENG_HTML.htm

